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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRAQ AND PKK/KADEK: S/CT BLACK AND TURKS
AGREE ON STRONG MESSAGE, COOPERATION IN PREPARING THE
BATTLEFIELD

REF: A. STATE 261988

[B](#). ANKARA 5962

[C](#). ANKARA 5919 (NODIS)

[D](#). ANKARA 5745

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SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (S) Coordinator for Counterterrorism Cofer Black and delegation met with an interagency GOT delegation led by MFA Deputy Undersecretary Sensoy October 2 in Ankara. Amb. Black told the Turks the USG would fight the PKK/KADEK, as it did all targets in the Global War on terrorism (GWOT) using all the elements of statecraft, and that he hoped the discussion would produce a meeting of minds on the shared objective of eliminating the PKK/KADEK terrorist threat from Iraq. Sensoy hoped the meeting would be results oriented, was glad things were moving in that direction, and sought confirmation that the military option would be available as a last resort. Amb. Black explained that we were already engaged in a process of military planning, and were moving on a number of other fronts via intelligence and State channels against the PKK/KADEK, but before we used military action, we needed to better prepare the battlefield. We needed to reduce the size of the target set the PKK/KADEK represented in northern Iraq. We could do this by fostering increased returns under the Reintegration Law, going after sources of financing, seeking EU support for designating KADEK a terrorist organization, and getting out a clear and unified message from the US and Turkey that there was a new day coming, that the option to go home was available, but if it were not taken the clock was ticking toward the time when that option would disappear as would any sanctuary in northern Iraq. Sensoy asked that we not link the return of bona fide refugees from Makhmour Camp with the possibilities of return for PKK terrorists under the Reintegration Law. In Makhmour, Amb. Black said, we would like the camp population smaller to make the PKK/KADEK more easily identifiable, and to show that the equation had changed by showing large numbers of returns. Regarding monitoring of Makhmour returnees, Sensoy said Turkey would agree to any UNHCR practice consistent with what UNHCR does globally. Sensoy asked if the US could apprehend four or five PKK/KADEK leaders and hand them over to Turkey, to reinforce our strong message. He also asked if we could consider cutting PKK/KADEK logistics support or disrupt PKK/KADEK command and control. Amb. Black said we would follow these matters up in other channels. The two sides agreed to stay in touch and to make strong public statements noting that there was US-Turkish agreement on a plan of action that would include all elements of statecraft and on continuing contacts on the details. Sensoy said he was pleased that we now had a framework that could be filled in as we move forward together. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (S) State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism Cofer Black and his delegation met in Ankara October 2 with an interagency Turkish delegation led by MFA Deputy Undersecretary Nabi Sensoy to discuss the PKK/KADEK presence in northern Iraq and other GWOT issues. Amb. Black was accompanied by Ambassador Edelman, the DCM and reps from POL, PMA, ODC and Regional Affairs. The rest of the traveling US delegation included: from State, Larry Silverman, EUR/SE, Andrew Wyllie, PRM, and John Sullivan, S/CT; from OSD Larry Franklin; and from the Joint Staff Lt. Col. Tom Milton. The Turkish delegation was the same as at Ref C talks. Amb. Black opened the session by noting that USG would fight the PKK/KADEK as it fought others in the GWOT, using all the elements of statecraft. "We may not do it the same way you do, but we share the same objective - the elimination of the terrorist threat from Iraq," he said. Sensoy summarized the discussion from the Sept. 12 meeting with Amb. Pascoe (Ref C) and emphasized that Turkey would like: PKK/KADEK elements in Iraq who are Turkish citizens to be repatriated, especially the leadership; those who were Iraqi citizens to be disarmed; and those of other nationality to be expelled from Iraq. None should be given the opportunity to work for political

organizations or to work against Turkish interests in Iraq. Turkey also wanted US support in persuading Iraq's neighbors and Europeans to deny entry to PKK/KADEK members and if they did enter, to deny them asylum and return them to Turkey.

US to Eliminate PKK/KADEK Threat - 1st Prep Battlefield

13. (S) Amb. Black noted that the President has said the US is committed to ending terror in or from Iraq and had designated PKK/KADEK a terrorist organization and that the President was also committed to eliminating terrorism in or from Iraq. That carried a responsibility to engage and resolve the PKK/KADEK problem. This would not be limited to diplomatic activity, although that was part of it. He reiterated that all elements of statecraft would be needed, and that none would succeed in isolation. Good intelligence, press and media work and policy all needed to be combined. Amb. Black said this was a USG policy imperative, that we were motivated and interested, but that it was a difficult issue in competition with others for attention and resources. He explained that by "eliminate" we did not mean that all PKK/KADEK elements needed to be killed, but that we would eliminate the threat they posed as efficiently and effectively as possible. We were already on a course of action that meets Turkish policy goals. He then described the need to prepare the battlefield by reducing the numbers of people remaining, concentrating them, and degrading their capabilities. So far, the job of trying to win them over to return had not been successful. We needed to discuss what more could be done, he said. Amb. Black also noted that the US military had completed various aspects of its planning, which was now under review by high military authorities. But the battlefield needed better preparation to limit the size of any eventual military operation. We must ensure, he said, that our opponents are aware of the reduction of their options, that those options are limited and attractive to meet our needs. Amb. Black noted that the US had been pressing the Europeans to designate KADEK a terrorist organization and to deprive them of funds and support. He stressed that anything suggesting the US and Turkey are not together in this effort subverts the process, and noted that we all needed to be careful about what we told the press. The USG message, he emphasized, has been consistent. We were serious about it. We were adamant to see it through. We must do everything we could, including on reintegration and repatriation issues, before we got to sending soldiers into the mountains to hunt down PKK/KADEK. It was also unhelpful, he said, to tie counterterrorism activity to the possibility of Turkish troop deployments for the stabilization force. They are separate issues, and one should not prejudice or influence the other.

14. (S) Sensoy replied that he had hoped the meeting would be results oriented and he was glad it was moving in that direction. He asked for confirmation that the military option was not excluded as a last resort. Amb. Black confirmed that after preparing via diplomacy, media, financial restriction, reducing the numbers, degrading the capabilities, etc., that we would engage at the end the smallest possible target. Sensoy agreed with the approach and asked what the specific options were individually and jointly short of military action. Amb. Black explained that the USG was already engaged and moving down the road in a number of areas, via State Dept. activity, intelligence exchange and military planning. If we do this well, he said, the military piece should be minor. If we were to go military today it would need to be major, and therefore would be inefficient. Sensoy said Turkey would do whatever the US needed it to in order to minimize the target. He said Turkey would work to make the benefits of its Reintegration Law better known, but that they had no doubt that it had been well publicized and that the people in question knew what benefits were available. The problem was that they did not want to surrender. But if the USG wanted Turkey to do so, Sensoy stated, they were prepared to do more, alone or jointly. They could consider leaflets and/or coordination with the KDP and PUK. He said he hoped that a strong message would result for the day's meeting informing the PKK leadership that the US and Turkey were working on an action plan. Unfortunately, he noted, Turkish intelligence since the Sept. 12 meeting indicated that the PKK leaders were pleased with developments and felt comfortable and assured after the last round of talks. Amb. Black stated that the PKK/KADEK had no grounds to feel any comfort whatsoever. But public diplomacy was important as what is said to the press does shape the battlefield. What should be said is "the clock is ticking. You have some serious choices to make. You can go home and be treated equitably. Have no illusion about how this will end." This, Amb. Black said, is where Turkey can make a huge contribution.

Makhmour - Need Better Message to Turks in Iraq

15. (S) Amb. Black told the Turks that based on what he was hearing, the PKK/KADEK elements did not think they could surrender without very high risk. Turkey might have to minimize even legitimate animosity and bad blood in order to change that. PRM's Andrew Wyllie discussed the situation at Makhmour Camp, where the population had not gotten the message that they were welcome back in Turkey, and that there were policies in place to help them reintegrate when they got home. He suggested that two things needed to happen simultaneously: we needed to go into the camp and see who was ready for voluntary repatriation and thereby separate out those pressing to stay; and the UNHCR was looking for conditions that would help argue for repatriation by holding up positive examples of returns. The UNHCR was interested in conducting an information program on how reintegration would proceed, who would help them and what social infrastructure was in place in the returnee environment. They were also looking for a monitoring role in Turkey, as they have everywhere else where there are returnees. There may be some residual population at the end who choose not to return but instead wish to stay in Iraq. Sensoy replied that while Makhmour was part of the larger picture, Turkey did not see its residents as terrorists or as the beneficiaries of the Reintegration Law. Successful returns from Makhmour were not relevant to encouraging PKK/KADEK terrorists to surrender because Makhmour residents would not be treated as terrorists and could return whenever they liked. They would not be restricted by the time limits of the law. Turkey, he said, was duty bound to provide food and shelter and other assistance to its returning citizens. Every year, he said, dozens of families return from Makhmour and are successfully reintegrated into Turkey. There are no cases of returnees complaining. He challenged the US delegation to find such a case, and then said Turkey did not need to prove to the world that it treated its citizens decently. It did so. "Please do not confuse the issues of Makhmour and the PKK/KADEK," he said. However, he went on, PKK/KADEK is controlling the camp and therefore the 200-250 PKK/KADEK elements there should first be eliminated so that every individual who wants to come home can. They will all be welcome, he said. But the point of departure in the PKK/KADEK effort cannot be resettlement of Makhmour residents. It is a matter of priority, but a separate issue.

16. (S) Sensoy added that Turkey was interested in repatriating the Makhmour population, was talking with the UN about it, and had designed a form for residents to use to express their will to return. But Turkey had avoided emphasizing the Reintegration Law in Makhmour because Turkey did not want Makhmour residents to think Turkey considered them terrorists or sympathizers. This would make them more reluctant to return home. Turkey wanted to send a team to Makhmour to determine interest in repatriation. One Turkish delegation member told us in a side conversation that the Turks would like to solicit this information only when there was no threat that the PKK/KADEK would influence the responses through intimidation. This could be done either after PKK/KADEK control of the camp was ended or if the GOT team could get answers to the questions on the same day. This would prevent PKK/KADEK elements in the camp from intimidating the population overnight. US delegation members told them they would have to discuss and clear procedures for doing anything in this regard with the UNHCR.

Turkey Must Encourage More Returns

17. (S) Amb. Black said that the US and Turkey seemed to have identical goals, but that the USG had heard that there was a problem in the message. People were uncertain about the situation they would return to if they came back to Turkey. They must know they will truly be welcome unless they have committed heinous crimes. Amb. Black said our job now was to change the balance of psychological calculations of those who could benefit under the Reintegration Law, so they will see where they have a future and where they do not. In Makhmour, he said, we would like the camp population smaller to make the PKK/KADEK more easily identifiable, and to show that the equation had changed by showing large numbers of returns. He also said we understood that the PKK/KADEK leadership had a hold on some information that was denied to the rank and file to prevent them from giving up. We needed to degrade that hold on information, he said. If together the US and Turkey sent a message that there was no future for them in Iraq, it would increase the overall effectiveness of the Reintegration Law. The stronger the message we send, the better, he said.

If the message they hear is that in the end nothing will happen, that weakens our hand. We needed to control perceptions and force hard choices. The Camp population was a part of the bigger picture in this regard. It would help if the PKK/KADEK knew there was a high probability that surrender would be accepted and those who did would be well treated. The war-fighting piece is not the big piece, he said. The big piece is Turkey's ability to entice as many home as possible. "Make it look like a land rush and isolate the ones who are left. That will get them scared," he said. Sensoy replied that to get large numbers of surrenders, the PKK/KADEK must get a strong message that we mean business, that there is an action plan and that if we must, we will use force. Their current comfort level means we did not get the message right after the Sept. 12 meeting. He said Turkey was open to suggestions about better promoting the Reintegration Law but at the same time needed the message to get out that we are going to act. That, he said, would be the beginning of the dissolution of the PKK/KADEK. He suggested that the capture and delivery to Turkey of a few leaders would help a great deal, both with the Turkish public and in relieving pressure from the PKK/KADEK rank and file to give up and benefit from the law.

18. (S) Amb. Black said that frankly, in the wake of Amb. Pascoe's Sept. 12 visit, when the GOT said that the US was not taking action, that was not helpful. It gave comfort to the enemy. We needed to tell PKK/KADEK that there were benefits for cooperative behavior and negative consequences, including possibly getting killed, for failing to cooperate. There is room, Amb. Black asserted, to create more enthusiasm for people to come home. Sensoy said the press play after the Sept. 12 meeting did not reflect the atmosphere or content of the meeting, but today the Turks needed to show what was done in our cooperation in concrete terms. He said that he had given Amb. Pascoe a draft MOU on the elimination of the PKK/KADEK from northern Iraq and asked him to study it in the hopes that Amb. Black could engage on it today. (Comment: In fact, Sensoy passed the draft MOU to DAS Pascoe as a non-paper, not as a draft to be reviewed for possible agreement. end comment.) Sensoy said Turkey also hoped for a joint statement after the meeting reflecting our common resolve to fight terror and that we were working together on an action plan and a timetable, and that no options were ruled out. The timeframe, he stressed, was important. The US shouldn't wait for six months, he said.

19. (S) Amb. Black explained that we had accepted the draft MOU as a non-paper and did not have a considered reaction to it, but could provide one at a later time. Sensoy asked that we provide that in diplomatic channels. He understood that it was not our practice to issue joint statements but hoped we could at least use the same concepts in our statements to the press. He and Amb. Black agreed that they would address the press together after the meeting.

Actions Turkey Would Like to See

10. (S) Sensoy asked what could be done short of military action. Amb. Black answered that we could continue to exert influence on the Europeans to designate KADEK as a terrorist organization. EUR/SE's Larry Silverman reviewed the state of play with various EU states, and noted that we were also pressing the EU to cut PKK/KADEK financing and to ensure that if the PKK/KADEK leaves Iraq they do not set up shop in Europe. He noted that we would approach the Syrians with similar messages. Sensoy noted that Turkey had given the US a list of 33 PKK/KADEK members, 27 of whom were leaders, including the crimes they had committed their aliases and maps with their locations. He asked if the information coincided with US information and if we had anything additional to share. He then asked if the US could apprehend 4 or 5 PKK/KADEK leaders and hand them over to Turkey, suggesting this would send a very strong message. He also asked to discuss cutting off PKK/KADEK logistic support, especially food, from Iraq's neighbors and the KDP and PUK. If it was useful to spread the word about the Reintegration Law more broadly, Turkey could prepare leaflets in Arabic and Kurdish and discuss with us how and where to drop them. Turkey, he said, was also interested in ways to interfere with PKK/KADEK command and control.

11. (S) Amb. Black said the USG placed great emphasis on reintegration, and that anything Turkey could do to sensitize PKK/KADEK members to find return attractive would be crucial, whether via leaflets or TV or radio. "That's where we need you the most," he said. We were, he added, interested in any Turkish tactical information on supply lines and urged Turkey to follow up on Sensoy's requests for action and information through intelligence and military channels. He recognized the impact that going after high value targets would have

with the Turkish public and with the PKK/KADEK.

¶12. (S) Andrew Wyllie added that UNHCR was eager to help pass information, and that we needed to ensure they could play that role. They also needed to play the monitoring role, which would send a reassuring message in Iraq about international presence in the return process. Sensoy answered that Turkey would go along with anything that was consistent with UNHCR practice. "We will not impede them, and will work with them to the fullest." At the suggestion of OSD's Larry Franklin, Sensoy said that Turkey would gladly be in contact with the Iraqi Governing Council or Iraqi ministries as well if that was required.

Satisfaction With Result

¶13. (S) In closing, Amb. Black urged the Turkish delegation to report to their superiors that we are already in an active process. We are determined. We know the objective. We have reviewed the mechanics and must now prepare the battlefield, including reducing lethality. "The horse has left the barn," and that we are here to facilitate the process of eliminating the PKK/KADEK threat. Sensoy and Amb. Black agreed that they had covered all they could at this point, and that the two sides would stay in touch, including via the Embassy, intelligence and military channels and over the phone between the principals as required. They did not see the need for another such meeting at this point. Sensoy ended the meeting by expressing his satisfaction with the meeting and where the issue now stood. "We now have a framework to fill in the future," he said.

¶14. (U) Amb. Black has cleared this message.

¶15. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.
EDELMAN